

## SATIRE 6

I can believe that Chastity lingered on earth during Saturn's reign <sup>1</sup> and that she was visible for a long time during the era when a chilly cave provided a tiny home, enclosing fire and hearth god and herd and its owners in communal gloom, when a mountain wife made her woodland bed with leaves and straw and the skins of her neighbours, the beasts. She was nothing like you, Cynthia, or you with your bright eyes marred by the death of your sparrow. <sup>2</sup> Instead she offered her paps for her hefty babies to drain, and she was often more unkempt than her acorn-belching husband. You see, people lived differently then, when the world was new and the sky was young—people who had no parents but were born from split oak or shaped from mud. <sup>3</sup>It's possible that many or at least some traces of ancient Chastity survived under Jupiter too—but that was before Jupiter had got his beard, before the Greeks had taken to swearing by someone else's name, at a time when no one feared that his cabbages or apples would be stolen but people lived with their gardens unwallled. It was afterwards that, little by little, Astraea withdrew to the gods above with Chastity as her companion. The two sisters ran away together. It's an ancient and established practice, Postumus, to pound someone else's bed, belittling the Spirit of the sacred couch. <sup>4</sup> Every other kind of crime came later, products of the iron age. It was the silver centuries that saw the first adulterers.

And yet, in our day and age, are you preparing an agreement and contract and wedding vows? Are you already having your hair combed by a master barber, and have you perhaps already given her finger your pledge? Well, you used to be sane, all right. Postumus, are you really getting married? Tell me what Tisiphone and what snakes are driving you mad. <sup>5</sup> Can you put up with any woman as your boss with so many ropes available, when those dizzily high windows are wide open, when the Aemilian bridge offers itself to you so conveniently? <sup>6</sup> Alternatively, if you don't like any of these many ways out, don't you think it would be better to have a boyfriend sleep with you? A boyfriend won't enter into nocturnal disputes, won't demand little presents from you as he lies

there, and won't complain that you're not exerting yourself or that you're not panting as much as you're told to.

“But Ursidius approves of the Julian Law. 7 He intends to raise a darling heir, though he'll be depriving himself of those large turtle doves and bearded mullets and the fortune-hunting meat market.” Is anything impossible, do you suppose, if a woman is marrying Ursidius? If the man who was once the most notorious of Casanovas, who has so often hidden inside Latinus' closet, in danger of his life, 8 is now inserting his stupid head into the marital halter? That's not all. He's actually looking for a wife of old-fashioned morals. Doctors, lance that swollen vein! 9 What a precious creature! If you find a lady who is pure, you should prostrate yourself in worship on the Tarpeian threshold and sacrifice a gilded heifer to Juno. 10 There are so few women fit to touch the fillets of Ceres and whose kisses wouldn't scare their fathers. Tie a garland to your doorposts and stretch the thick ivy clusters all around your threshold. 11 But is one man enough for Hiberina? You'll force her to say first that she'd be happy with one eye. “Yet there's a woman living on her father's country estate who has a high reputation.” Well, let her live at Gabii or at Fidenae 12 just as she lived in the countryside—and then I'll grant you that “little farm of her father.” But who says that nothing ever happened on the hills or in the caves? Have Jupiter and Mars become so very superannuated?

Can our colonnades show you any woman who matches your wishes? Do our shows with all their tiers contain an object that you could pick out from there and love without anxiety? When sinuous Bathyllus is dancing his pantomimic Leda, 13 Tuccia loses control of her bladder, Apula yelps, and Thymele is all attention. It's then that clodhopping Thymele learns something. 14 But others, when the stage curtains have been packed away into retirement, when the theatre is locked and empty, and the only noise comes from the courts, and when the People's Games are past and the Megalesian Games are far away, 15 in their melancholy mood clutch Accius' mask or wand or tights. Urbicus in an Atellan farce gets a laugh with his imitation of Autonoe, 16 and penniless Aelia falls in love with him. These women pay a lot to get a comic actor's clasp

undone. There are women who stop Chrysogonus from singing. Hispulla is crazy for a tragic actor. Or would you expect them to fall for a Quintilian? 17 You're marrying a wife who'll make the lyre-player Echion or Glaphyrus or the piper Ambrosius a father. Let's set up the long platforms along the narrow streets, let's decorate the doorposts and the doors with abundant laurels, Lentulus, so that your noble child in his tortoiseshell cradle can remind you of—Euryalus the gladiator! 18

Eppia, the senator's wife, accompanied a troop of gladiators to Pharos and the Nile and the notorious walls of Lagus, while Canopus expressed its disapproval of the monstrous morality of Rome. 19 Oblivious of her home and husband and sister, she disregarded her fatherland and shamelessly deserted her wailing children and, what's more amazing, Paris 20 and the Games. But although as a little girl she had slept in great opulence on her family down in cradles with flounces, she scorned the sea. (Her reputation she'd scorned a long time ago. That's the tiniest loss among these luxurious ladies' litters.) And so with heart undaunted she endured the Tyrrhenian waves and the Ionian's loud boom, although she had to pass from one sea to the next so many times. If the reason for the danger is right and honourable, women are afraid. Their hearts are frozen with terror and they can't stand on their trembling feet. But they are feisty in matters of daring and disgrace. If it's her husband who tells her to, it's hard to board a ship. That's when the bilge water is sickening, that's when the sky wheels round and round. But the woman who's accompanying her lover has a strong stomach. The other one pukes all over her husband, but this one takes her food with the sailors and wanders all over the deck and enjoys handling the rough ropes. But what were the good looks and youthfulness that enthralled Eppia and set her on fire? What did she see in him to make her put up with being called a gladiator's groupie? After all, her darling Sergius had already started shaving his throat and with his gashed arm had hopes of retirement. Besides, his face was really disfigured: there was a furrow chafed by his helmet, an enormous lump right on his nose, and the nasty condition of a constantly weeping eye. But he was a gladiator. That's what makes them into Hyacinthuses. 21 That's what she preferred to her sons and her fatherland, to her sister and her husband. It's the steel that they're in love

with. This same Sergius, if he'd been discharged, would have started to resemble a Veiento. 22

Are you concerned about what happened in a private household, what Eppia got up to? Then take a look at the rivals of the gods, 23 listen to what Claudius put up with. When his wife 24 realised her husband was asleep, she would leave, with no more than a single maid as her escort. Preferring a mat to her bedroom in the Palace, she had the nerve to put on a nighttime hood, the whore-empress. Like that, with a blonde wig hiding her black hair, she went inside a brothel reeking of ancient blankets to an empty cubicle—her very own. Then she stood there, naked and for sale, with her nipples gilded, under the trade name of “She-Wolf,” putting on display the belly you came from, noble-born Britannicus. 25 She welcomed her customers seductively as they came in and asked for their money. Later, when the pimp was already dismissing his girls, she left reluctantly, waiting till the last possible moment to shut her cubicle, still burning with her clitoris inflamed and stiff. She went away, exhausted by the men but not yet satisfied, and, a disgusting creature, with her cheeks filthy, dirty from the smoke of the lamp, she took back to the emperor's couch the stench of the brothel. 26

“But why does Caesennia's husband swear that she's the perfect wife?” She brought him a million. 27 For that amount he'll call her faithful. He's not wasting away from Venus' quiver or blazing from her torch. It's the money that sets his flares alight, the arrows come from her dowry. Her freedom is paid for. She can flirt and reply to love letters all she likes in front of her husband. A wealthy woman who marries a greedy man is in effect single.

“Why is Sertorius burning with desire for Bibula?” If you shake out the truth, it's the face he loves, not the wife. The minute she has three wrinkles and her skin gets dry and flabby, her teeth get discoloured and her eyes shrink, his freedman will say to her, “Pack up all your paraphernalia and get out. You're a real nuisance to us now, always wiping your nose. Get out right away, and make it quick. Someone with a dry nose is coming to take your place.” Till then, she's in favour and in

charge, asking her husband for shepherds, Canusian sheep, Falernian vineyards 28 —such tiny requests!—all his slave boys, all his prison gangs. Anything her neighbour has and she doesn't, must be bought. Then in the month of winter, when Jason the merchant is shut off from view and gleaming booths screen his armed sailors, 29 she'll carry off large crystal vases, the most enormous pieces of agate too, along with a legendary diamond, its value enhanced by Berenice's finger. 30 It was once given by the barbarian Agrippa to his incestuous sister to wear, in the place where barefooted kings keep the sabbath as their feast day and their traditional mercy is kind to elderly pigs. 31

“So is there no woman from all these huge herds who lives up to your requirements?” She can be beautiful, graceful, wealthy, fertile, she can display her ancient ancestors all around her colonnades, she can be more virginal than any of the Sabine women with dishevelled hair who stopped the war 32 —a rare bird on this earth, exactly like a black swan—but who can stand a wife who is perfection itself? I'd rather, much rather, have Venustina 33 than you, Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, if along with your great virtues you bring a haughty expression and if you count your triumphs as part of your dowry. Take away your Hannibal, please! And your Syphax, defeated in his camp! Out you go, with your Carthage and all! 34 “Please show mercy, Healer! Goddess, put down your arrows! The boys are innocent. It's their mother you should shoot!” That's what Amphion shouts, but the Healer draws his bow. 35 That's how Niobe buried her flocks of sons and their father too, for thinking herself more noble than the family of Latona and at the same time more prolific than the white sow of Alba. 36 What comportment and what beauty is worth so much if she considers you forever in her debt? The fact is, there's no pleasure in these rare and exalted advantages when the woman is spoiled by a pride that contains more aloes 37 than honey. Who, actually, was ever so devoted that he wouldn't loathe the wife he praises to the skies and hate her for seven hours of every twelve?

Some faults are minor but too much for husbands to put up with. After all, what is more nauseating than the fact that no woman thinks she's beautiful unless she's turned herself from a Tuscan into a Greeklette,

from a woman of Sulmo into a pure Cecropian woman? 38 Everything is in Greek. They express their fears and pour out their anger, their joy, their worries, and all the secrets of their souls in this language. What else is there? They get laid in Greek. And though you may allow that in young girls, do you still use Greek when your eighty-sixth year is knocking on the door? This language is not decent for an old woman. Whenever that sexy “Mia vita, mio spirito” ζωὴ καὶ ψυχὴ 39 pops out, you are using in public words that should be spoken only beneath the blanket. Is there any crotch that’s not in fact aroused by such a seductive and naughty phrase? It has fingers of its own. But—to flatten all your fine feathers—though you speak these words more sensuously than Haemus or Carpophorus, 40 your age can be calculated from your face.

If you are not going to fall in love with the woman who was promised to you and is joined to you by lawful contract, there seems to be no reason for getting married. There’s no point in wasting the feast and the cakes which have to be given to guests already bloated when the occasion is breaking up, or the present that’s offered for the first night, when “Victor in Dacia” and “Victor in Germany,” inscribed in gold, glitter on a rich platter. 41 If you’re straightforwardly fond of your wife, if your heart is devoted to her alone, then bend your head and be prepared to put your neck beneath the yoke. You’ll not find any woman who shows mercy to the man who loves her. 42 You’ll never be able to make any gifts if she says no, you’ll sell nothing if she objects, and nothing will you buy without her agreement. She’ll prescribe your affections for you: that friend of yours, the one whose first beard was witnessed by your door and who’s now getting on, will be turned away. Although even pimps and trainers of gladiators have complete freedom when making their wills, although the arena enjoys the same right, your heirs will be dictated to you, including more than one of your rivals. “Crucify that slave.” “What crime has he committed to deserve punishment? Who says they witnessed it? Who accused him? Give him a hearing! No hesitation is ever long enough when a person’s life is at stake.” “You idiot! Is a slave a person? All right, let’s accept that he hasn’t done anything. But it’s my wish and my command. Let my will be reason enough.” That’s how she orders her husband about. But before long she leaves her kingdom and

keeps changing residences, wearing out her bridal veil. Then she flits away again, and returning to her imprint in the bed she'd rejected, leaves behind the doorways which had just been decorated, the drapes hanging on the walls and the branches still green over the threshold. That's how the tally increases. That's how there come to be eight husbands in five autumns—an achievement worth recording on her grave.

There's no hope of harmony if your mother-in-law is alive. She'll train her daughter to enjoy fleecing her husband bare. She'll train her to reply in no simple or straightforward way to the letters sent by her seducer. She'll outwit your chaperons or buy them with a bribe. Then again, though she's perfectly well, she'll summon Archigenes and lie there tossing her heavy bedcovers. 43 Meanwhile her lover lurks concealed, impatiently keeping quiet while drawing back his foreskin. You don't really expect a mother to pass on respectable behaviour, so different from her own, do you? Besides, it profits the disgusting old woman to bring up her little daughter to be disgusting.

There's almost no lawsuit where a woman didn't start the dispute. Manilia will be the prosecutor if she isn't the defendant. On their own they compose and construct the documents, and they'll not draw the line at dictating to Celsus how to open his speech and what points to make. 44

Everyone knows about the tracksuits in Tyrian purple 45 and the women's wrestling floors. And everyone's seen the battered training post, hacked away by her repeated sword thrusts and bashed by her shield. 46 The lady goes through all the drill, absolutely qualified for the trumpet at the festival of Flora. 47 Unless, of course, in her heart she's planning something more and is practising for the real arena. What sense of modesty can you find in a woman wearing a helmet, who runs away from—her own gender? It's violence she likes. All the same, she wouldn't want to be a man—after all, the pleasure we experience is so little in comparison! What a fine sight it would be if there were an auction of your wife's things—her sword belt and her arm protectors and her crests and the half-size shin guard for her left leg! 48 Or, if it's a

different kind of battle that she fights, you'll be in bliss as your girl sells off her greaves! 49 Yet these are women who break out into a sweat in the thinnest wrap and whose delicate skin is chafed by the finest wisp of silk. Hark at her roaring while she drives home the thrusts she's been taught. Hark at the weight of the helmet that has her wilting, at the size and the thickness of the bandages that surround her knees—and then have a laugh when she takes off her armour to pick up the chamber pot. Tell us, you granddaughters of Lepidus and blind Metellus and Fabius Maw, 50 what gladiator's woman ever put on gear like this? When does Asylus' wife grunt at the training post? 51

The bed with a bride in it is always full of disputes and mutual recriminations. Not much sleep there. That's when she's terrible to her husband, that's when she's worse than a tigress who's lost her cubs. Guilty about her secret misdemeanours, she pretends she's upset, detesting your slave boys or complaining about some made-up mistress. She always has floods of tears ready at their station, just waiting for her to tell them exactly how to flow. And then you are delighted, thinking it's love, you worm, 52 and you kiss away her tears. But what notes and letters you'd read if you opened up the writing desk of your jealous adulteress! Say she's found lying in the arms of a slave—or a knight. “Quintilian, 53 please, give me one of your lines of defence for this situation.” “I'm stuck. Find one yourself.” “We agreed a long time ago,” she says, “that you could do what you liked and that I could please myself. You can holler all you like and turn the world upside down, I am human.” 54 There's nothing to match the effrontery of a woman caught in the act. Her guilt inspires her fury and her defiance.

But where do these monstrosities come from, you're asking, what's their source? In the old days it was their lowly position that kept Latin women pure. What kept the contamination of vice from their tiny homes was hard work, short sleep, hands chafed and hardened from handling Tuscan fleeces, Hannibal close to Rome, and their husbands manning the Colline tower. 55 These days, we are suffering the calamities of long peace. Luxury has settled down on us, crueller than fighting, avenging the world we've conquered. From the moment Roman poverty



disappeared, no crime or act of lust has been missing: Corinth and Sybaris and Rhodes and Miletus have poured into Rome, along with Tarentum, garlanded, insolent and sozzled. 56 It was filthy money that first imported foreign ways, and effete wealth that corrupted our era with its disgusting decadence. After all, when she's drunk does your Venus care about anything? She doesn't know the difference between head and crotch, the woman who chomps giant oysters when it's already midnight, when the perfumes are foaming after being mixed with undiluted Falernian, 57 when drinking is from a perfume jar, when the ceiling's started going round and round and the table's dancing about with its lamps duplicated. Go on, ask yourself why Tullia sneers as she sniffs the air, and what notorious Maura's "foster-sister" says to her when Maura passes the ancient altar of Chastity. 58 It's here that they halt their litters at night, it's here that they piss and fill the goddess's image with their powerful streams, and take it in turns to ride one another and thrash around with no man present. 59 Then off home they go. When the daylight has returned, you tread in your wife's urine on your way to call on important friends.

Everyone knows the secret rites of the Good Goddess, 60 when the pipe excites the loins and, crazed by horn and wine alike, the maenads of Priapus are carried away, whirling their hair and howling. 61 How their minds are all on fire to get laid then, how they squeal to the dance of their desire, how abundant a torrent of undiluted lust runs over their dripping thighs! Saufeia takes off her garland and issues a challenge to the brothel-keepers' slave girls. She wins the prize for swinging her arse, then she in turn worships Medullina's undulating surges. 62 The contest is between the ladies: their expertise matches their birth. Nothing there will be pretend or imitation. It'll all be done for real. It could create a spark in the son of Laomedon, already chill with age, or in Nestor's swollen scrotum. 63 That's the itch of impatience, that's the moment of pure Woman. The shout's repeated in unison from the entire grotto: "Now's the time! Send in the men!" If her lover's asleep, she'll tell his son to put on his hood and hurry along. If that's no good, there's an assault on the slaves. If there's no prospect of slaves available, they'll pay the water delivery man to come in. If they can't find him and there's a deficit of

humans, not a moment passes before she voluntarily offers her arse to be tugged 64 by a donkey. If only our ancient rites, or at least our state ceremonies, were conducted unsullied by such taints. But all the Moors and the Indians know about the “lute girl” who brought a penis larger than both of Caesar’s “Anti-Cato” speeches into that place which even a male mouse avoids, all too aware of his balls, the place where any picture portraying the shape of the other sex has to be covered up. 65 And in those old days, what human being ever scorned divine power? What human being had ever dared to laugh at Numa’s earthenware ladles or the black bowls or the brittle dishes from the Vatican hill? 66 But these days, is there any altar without a Clodius? 67

In any house where a professor of obscenity lives and sports, his fidgety right hand suggesting he stops at nothing, you’ll find that everyone is disgusting—no better than pathics. 68 These creatures they allow to pollute the food and to stand close by the sacred table. The crockery which should be smashed once Gourd or bearded Swallow-tail 69 has drunk from it they simply have washed. That makes the gladiator trainer’s establishment purer and better than your holy hearth. In his troop Skin is told to keep well away from Loaded. 70 Then there’s the fact that the nets aren’t kept alongside the tunic of disgrace, and that the shoulder guards and the trident of the gladiator who fights naked are not stored in the same locker. 71 Such souls are relegated to the lowest section of the school and in their prison they have different chains. But your wife has you share a goblet with creatures that the blonde whore from the dilapidated tomb would refuse to join for a drink, even if the wine were from Alba or Surrentum. 72 It’s on their advice that women suddenly get married and divorced. It’s to them that they confide their depressions and their worries in life. It’s from their tuition that they learn how to shimmy their backsides and their hips and whatever else their instructor knows. But he’s not always to be trusted. He’ll enhance his eyes with soot, his saffron outfit unfastened, a hair-netted adulterer! The more sensuous his voice, the more often his right hand lingers in his smooth crotch, the more suspicious you should be. In bed he’ll be supremely virile. There he’ll take off his mask, a “Thais” danced by an expert “Triphallus.” 73 “Who are you fooling? Keep that masquerade for

other people! Let's make a bet: I declare that you are every inch a man. I declare it. Do you admit it? Or do the female slaves get summoned to the torturer's rack? I'm familiar with the advice and all the warnings you, my old friends, offer: 'Bolt the door and keep her in.' But who's going to chaperone the chaperons themselves, when nowadays this is the reward they get for keeping quiet about the naughty girl's affairs." Their complicity guarantees their silence. A clever wife anticipates this and begins with them.

Some women are delighted by un-macho eunuchs with their ever gentle kisses and their unfulfilled beard—and there's no need to use abortion drugs. Yet the height of their pleasure is when a crotch that's already ripe with the hot blood of youth and its black quill is taken to visit the surgeons. 74 So it is that the testicles are allowed to drop and told to grow first and then, once they make two pounds in weight, Heliodorus tears them off, to the loss of the barber and no one else. 75 (But it's a real and pitiable loss that sears the boys of the slavedealers. They're embarrassed by the pouch and the chickpea they're left with. 76 ) The man made a eunuch by his mistress catches the eye from far off and attracts everyone's gaze as he enters the baths: there's no doubt that he can challenge the guardian of the vine and the garden. 77 You can let him sleep with his mistress, Postumus, but don't entrust your Bromius to a eunuch when he's no longer soft and needs a haircut. 78

And these days the greatest and least of women alike experience the same lust. The woman who treads the black pavement with her bare feet is no better than the woman conveyed on the shoulders of tall Syrians. To go watch the games, Ogulnia has to rent a dress, rent attendants, a chair, a cushion, some woman friends, a nurse, and a blonde girl to give her orders to. 79 Yet this same woman gives away whatever's left of her ancestral silver plate, down to the last vases, to smooth-skinned athletes. Many women are short of money, but none feels any of the shame of poverty or matches herself to its limits. 80 Their husbands occasionally look to the future, and some of them conceive a terror of cold and hunger, learning the lesson of the ant at long last. But a spend-spend-spend woman has no awareness of her failing resources. Just as if the

coins were forever regenerating and sprouting up from the exhausted treasure chest and taken from an ever replenished heap, she gives never a thought to the cost of her pleasures.

If she enjoys music, no one who sells his voice to the praetors will hang on to his clasp. 81 She's for ever handling musical instruments, her thicket of sardonyx rings sparkling all over the tortoiseshell lyre, and she strikes the strings rhythmically with the quivering quill used by tender Hedymeles in his performances. 82 This she hugs, this is her consolation, and she lavishes kisses upon the beloved plectrum. A woman from the tally of the Lamiae, with the name of Appius, 83 kept asking Janus and Vesta with offerings of grain and wine whether Pollio had any chance of winning the Capitoline crown and of promising victory to his lyre. 84 Is there anything more she could have done if her husband had been sick or if the doctors had been pessimistic about her dear little boy? She stood there in front of the altar, thinking it no disgrace to veil her head 85 for a lyre. She recited the prescribed words in the proper form and went pale when the lamb was opened up. Tell me now, please, father Janus, tell me, most ancient of the gods, do you answer people like her? You must have plenty of leisure in the sky. There's nothing, as far as I can see, nothing to occupy you there. One woman consults you about comic actors, another will want to recommend a tragic actor. The soothsayer will soon get varicose veins! 86

But it's better for her to be musical than to go brazenly racing all over Rome, the sort of woman who can attend men-only meetings and actually converse with the generals in their uniforms in her husband's presence with her face unflinching and her nipples dry. This is the woman who knows everything that's happening throughout the world—what the Chinese and the Thracians are up to, the secrets of the stepmother and the boy, who's in love, and which Casanova they're fighting over. She'll tell you who got the widow pregnant and in which month. She'll tell you the words each woman uses in bed and how many positions she knows. She's the first to see the comet that's bad news for the king of Armenia and Parthia. 87 She picks up the latest tales and rumours at the city gates and she invents some herself. Niphates 88 is on

the move, threatening whole populations, and massive flooding has engulfed all the fields, cities are teetering, tracts of land are subsiding—that’s what she’ll say to anyone she meets at any street corner. But no less insufferable is the woman who grabs hold of her lowly neighbours and lays into them with a whip, cursing all the while. If her sound sleep is disturbed by a dog barking, you see, she says, “Quick! Fetch the cudgels here!” and gives the order that first the owner, then the dog is to get a thrashing. She’s formidable to meet, with an utterly hideous face. It’s at night that she goes to the baths, at night that she gives the command to move camp along with her perfume jars. She enjoys sweating amidst the din. When her arms drop to her sides after a workout with heavy weights, the expert masseur presses his fingers into her tuft too and forces a shriek from the top of his mistress’ thigh. All this time, her miserable dinner guests are overwhelmed by sleepiness and hunger. Eventually, she arrives, face flushed and thirsty enough for the whole flagon of wine which is set at her feet bulging with its full three gallons. From this she downs two pints before dinner, to create a raging appetite, until it all comes back up and hits the ground along with her washed-out insides: 89 streams are running all over the marble floors and the gilded basin stinks of Falernian. 90 It’s like the long snake that’s fallen into a deep vat, 91 that’s exactly how she boozes and spews up. No wonder her husband feels sick and closes his eyes to keep down his bile.

But she’s much worse, the woman who as soon as she’s taken her place at dinner is praising Virgil and forgiving Elissa on her deathbed, 92 who pits the poets against one another and assesses them, weighing in her scales Maro 93 on this side and Homer on the other. The schoolteachers give way, the teachers of rhetoric are beaten, the whole party falls silent, there’ll not be a word from any lawyer or auctioneer—and not even from another woman. Such vigorous verbiage pours from her, you’d say it was the sound of people bashing all their bowls and bells at once. There’s no need now for anyone to wear out the trumpets or the gongs. On her own she can give assistance to the Moon in her struggle. 94 Don’t let the lady reclining next to you have her own rhetorical style or brandish phrases before hurling her rounded syllogism at you. Don’t let her know the whole of history. Let there be a few things in books that

she doesn't even understand. I loathe the woman who is forever referring to Palaemon's Grammar 95 and thumbing through it, observing all the laws and rules of speech, or who quotes lines I've never heard, a female scholar. Do men bother about such things? It's the language of her philistine girlfriend she should be criticising. Husbands should be allowed their grammatical oddities. The fact of the matter is that the woman who longs to appear excessively clever and eloquent should hitch up a tunic knee-high, sacrifice a pig to Silvanus, and pay just a quarter to enter the baths. 96

There's nothing a woman doesn't allow herself, nothing she considers disgusting, once she has put an emerald choker around her neck and has fastened giant pearls to her elongated ears. Meanwhile her face is a hideous sight, quite ludicrous, all swollen with layers of dough and reeking of rich Poppean creams 97 that get glued to her miserable husband's lips. Eventually she uncovers her face, removing the outer layers of plaster. She starts to be recognisable. She bathes in the milk for which she'd take she-asses in her entourage if she were banished to the Hyperborean region. 98 At her lover's she'll arrive with her skin cleansed. When does she want to look lovely at home? For their lovers they obtain aromatics, for them they buy everything you slender Indians export to us. 99 But when she's coated and freshened up with all those concoctions one after another, and had lumps of hot, moist dough applied, will you call it a face or a sore?

It's worthwhile investigating in detail how they keep themselves occupied during the day. If her husband slept with his back turned last night, the wool-girl 100 has had it, and the hairdressers must remove their tunics, and the Liburnian slave is told he is late and has to pay for someone else's sleep. 101 One breaks the canes, another reddens under the whip, another under the strap. There are women who pay their torturers an annual wage. She lashes them and the whole time daubs her face and listens to her girlfriends or inspects the wide golden stripe on an embroidered dress, and whacks them. She reads over her long vertical account book, 102 and whacks them, until the whackers are exhausted and she booms in a horrible voice "Off you go!" now that her

inquisition is over. The regime in her house is just as cruel as a Sicilian court. 103 After all, if she has an assignation and wants to be beautified more carefully than usual, if she's in a hurry and is already expected in the park, or rather at the sanctuary of "Madam" Isis, 104 unlucky Psecas 105 will be arranging her hair with her own strands torn, with her shoulders and her breasts stripped bare. "Why is this curl sticking up?" The bullhide strap is the immediate punishment for the wicked crime of the twisting ringlet. What has Psecas done wrong? How can it be your slave girl's fault if you don't like your own nose? On your left another slave is drawing out and combing your hair and coiling it into a bun. In her council sits a slave of her mother's, who was promoted to the wool when she retired from hairpins after serving her time. Her opinion will be sought first. After her, her inferiors in age and skill will give their views, as if it were a matter of reputation or of life itself. That's how much care is given to the quest for beautification. She weighs down her head with tiers upon tiers and piles her head high with storeys upon storeys. From the front you'll see an Andromache 106 but from behind she's smaller. You'd think it was someone else. Imagine the scenario if by fate's stingy measure she's been allotted a short flank, and without the help of high-heeled boots seems shorter than a Pygmy girl and lightly rises up on tiptoe to be kissed. All the while, she'll give her husband not a thought. There'll be no mention of the cost. She behaves as if she were her husband's neighbour, more intimate only in that she hates her husband's friends and his slaves, and wrecks his accounts.

Look! In comes the troupe of frenzied Bellona and the Mother of the Gods, 107 along with an enormous eunuch, a face his perverted sidekick must revere. A long time ago now he picked up a shard and cut off his soft genitals. The noisy band and the common drums fall quiet in his presence and his cheeks are clothed in the Phrygian cap. In a booming voice he tells the woman to beware the arrival of September and the southerly winds, unless she purifies herself with a hundred eggs and presents him with her old russet-coloured dresses, to ensure that any serious or unforeseen disaster that's impending disappears into the clothes and atones for the whole year in one go. In the wintertime she'll break the ice, step down into the river and submerge herself three times in the

morning Tiber, even cleansing her terrified head in those swirling waters. Then, naked and shivering, she'll crawl right across the Proud King's Field 108 on bleeding knees. If white Io tells her to, she'll go to the ends of Egypt and bring back water fetched from sweltering Meroë to sprinkle in Isis' temple, towering next to the ancient sheepfold. 109 You see, she thinks her instructions come from the voice of the Lady herself!

There you have the kind of mind and soul that the gods converse with at night! Consequently, the highest, most exceptional honour is awarded to Anubis, who runs along, mocking the wailing populace, surrounded by his creatures in linen garments and with shaved heads. 110 He's the one that asks for a pardon whenever your wife does not refrain from sex on the days which should be kept sacred and a large fine is due for violation of the quilt. When the silver snake has been seen to move its head, 111 it's his tears and his practised mumblings which ensure that Osiris will not refuse to pardon her fault—provided, of course, he's bribed by a fat goose and a slice of sacrificial cake.

No sooner has he gone than a palsied Jewish woman will abandon her hay-lined chest and start begging into her private ear. She's the expounder of the laws of Jerusalem, high priestess of the tree, reliable intermediary of highest heaven. 112 She too gets her hand filled, though with less, because Jews will sell you whatever dreams you like for the tiniest copper coin. Promises of a toy-boy or an enormous bequest from a childless millionaire will be made by a soothsayer from Armenia or Commagene once he's delved into the lung of a dove, still warm. He'll probe the breasts of chickens, the insides of a puppy, and sometimes of a boy too—something he will himself report to the authorities.

But they have even greater faith in the Chaldaeans. 113 Whatever the astrologer says they'll believe has come from Ammon's fountain, 114 now that the oracles at Delphi are silent and the human race is doomed to darkness about the future. 115 Yet the most important of these is the one that's been exiled most often. That's the source of their faith in his skill, if his right hand has clanked with iron. 116 There's no talent in any astrologer without a criminal record, but only in the one who nearly



died, who just managed to get sent to a Cycladic island and finally languished on tiny Seriphus. 117 Your Tanaquil 118 asks for advice about the lingering death of her jaundiced mother—she’s already asked about you!—and about when she’ll bury her sister and her uncles, or whether her lover will outlive her. After all, is there anything more important that the gods could grant her? And yet she does not herself understand the threats from the gloomy planet of Saturn, or the signs under which Venus has a favourable aspect, which month is destined for losses, which times are destined for profit. But remember to avoid ever running into the kind of woman who you’ll see holding in her hands a well thumbed almanac like it was a clammy ball of amber. 119 She doesn’t consult anyone else, but these days is consulted herself. She will not accompany her husband when he heads for camp or for home if the calculations of Thrasyllus detain her. 120 When she decides to drive to the first milestone, she finds the best hour in her book. If the corner of her little eye itches when she rubs it, she asks for ointment only after she’s checked her horoscope. If she’s ill and lying in bed, no moment seems more right for eating than the one prescribed by Petosiris. 121 If she’s less well off, she’ll cross the space between the two turning posts 122 and draw the cards that tell her fortune, and offer her forehead and her hand to the seer who asks her to make noisy kisses. 123 Rich women will get their replies from a Phrygian seer, or from someone expensively brought from \*\*\* , or from an expert in the stars and the cosmos, or from the elder who buries lightning strikes for the state. 124 Plebeian destiny is settled in the Circus and the Embankment. The woman displaying a length of gold on her bare neck asks for advice in front of the towers and the dolphin columns 125 about whether to abandon the shopkeeper and marry the cloakseller.

But at least these women undergo the dangers of childbirth and put up with all the work of nursing that their position in life forces on them. By contrast, hardly any woman lies in labour on a gilded bed. So powerful are the skills and drugs of the woman who manufactures sterility and takes contracts to kill humans inside the belly. Celebrate, you poor wretch. Offer your wife whatever she has to drink yourself. After all, if she were prepared to stretch and torture her womb with jumping baby

boys, you'd perhaps turn out to be father of an Ethiopian. Soon you will be monopolised by your discoloured heir—whom you'd never want to see in the morning light.

I won't mention spurious children and the joys and prayers so often cheated at the filthy latrines, the high priests and Salian priests so often acquired from there to bear the name of Scaurus in their false persons. 126 There Fortune shamelessly stands at night, smiling on the naked babies. She nurtures them in her arms and gives them a cuddle, then passes them on to exalted houses, preparing a secret farce for herself. These are the children she loves and these she showers with attention, always promoting them as her own special babies.

One man supplies magic incantations and another sells Thessalian potions which enable a wife to confuse her husband's mind and beat him on the buttocks with her sandal. That's the reason you're going mad, that's the reason for the haziness in your head and for your complete amnesia of things you've just done. All the same, that is bearable, provided you don't also start raving like that uncle of Nero, after Caesonia concocted for him the entire forehead of a wobbly foal. 127 Is there any woman who'll hold back from what an emperor's wife has done? The whole world was on fire and collapsing with its fabric in ruins precisely as if Juno had made her husband mad. So Agrippina's mushroom will turn out to be less damaging, seeing that all it did was stop the heart of a single old man and command his shaking head and his lips dripping with strands of saliva to go down to heaven. 128 The other potion, by contrast, insists upon steel and fires, and it tortures and mangles senators and knights in indiscriminate carnage. That was the high price of a mare's offspring, of a single witch.

Wives hate the children born to mistresses. No one would resist, no one would forbid it, because for a long time now it's been lawful to kill a stepson. 129 You fatherless orphans too, who are rather well off, I warn you—watch out for your lives and don't trust a single dish. Those pastries are steaming darkly with maternal poison. Get someone else to taste first

anything that's offered to you by the woman who bore you. Get your terrified tutor to drink from the cup before you.

I'm making all this up, am I, letting satire put on tragic high heels? I've exceeded the legal limits of my predecessors and I'm ranting with rotundity worthy of Sophocles a grand song that's new to the Rutulian hills and the Latin sky? If only this were really nonsense! But Pontia 130 declares: "Guilty! I admit it! I gave aconite to my own boys. The murder was discovered and made public. Yet it was I who performed the crime myself." You did away with two at a single meal yourself, did you, cruellest of vipers? Two, yourself? "I'd have done away with seven if there'd happened to be seven." We have to believe what the tragedians say about the savage woman of Colchis and about Procne. 131 I won't attempt to dispute it. Those women too dared monstrosities enormous for their own times—but not because of money. Those heights of monstrosity elicit less amazement when it's anger that makes the female sex into criminals—when with frenzy inflaming their guts, they're swept along out of control like rocks torn from crags where the mountain beneath them caves in and its face recedes from the overhanging slope. The woman I cannot stand is the one who calculatingly commits an enormous crime in full command of her senses. They watch Alcestis endure her husband's death 132 and, if a similar swap were offered to them, they'd happily see their husbands die to save their puppy's life. Every morning you'll run into a granddaughter of Belus 133 and an Eriphyle many times over. 134 There's no street without its Clytemnestra. The only difference is this. The daughter of Tyndareus 135 wielded a stupid and clumsy double-headed axe with both her hands, but these days the matter is accomplished with the tiny lung of a toad. Yet she'll use steel too, if her Atrides 136 has taken the cautionary measure of dosing himself with the Pontic antidotes of the three times conquered king. 137

## JUVENAL 6

### NOTES from the Loeb

234

1Saturn was the king of the gods before his son Jupiter ousted him and exiled him to live on earth. His reign on earth, where he was joined by Chastity (Pudicitia) and Justice (Astraea), was regarded as the Golden Age.

2Cynthia was the idol of the love elegist Propertius. A generation earlier, Catullus had celebrated his love for Lesbia and depicted her distress at the death of her sparrow in Poem 3.

3The first humans were said to have been born from rocks and oaks (Virg. Aen. 8.314–15) or to have been made from clay by Prometheus.

236

4The Spirit was the Genius, guardian of the family (gens), whose image appeared on the marriage bed.

5Tisiphone was one of the Furies, who were pictured with snakes in their hair, cf. Virg. Aen. 7.329.

6All ways of committing suicide.

7The Julian Laws, enacted in 18 B.C., promoted marriage and procreation.

238

8The famous actor Latinus, evidently in the role of the husband in a farce where the adulterer hides in a chest.

9An excess of blood was regarded as a sign of madness.

10The Tarpeian shrine was the Capitoline temple of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. Juno was the goddess of marriage.

11Part of the celebrations for a wedding.

12Country towns in Latium.

13Evidently a pantomime dancer sharing the name of the favourite of Maecenas. Leda was the mother of Helen, Clytemnestra, Castor, and Pollux by Jupiter, who seduced her in the form of a swan.

240

14The actress of 1.36, here depicted as learning from Bathyllus' sophistication.

15The People's Games (ludi Plebeii) took place on November 4th–18th and the ludi Megalenses on April 4th–8th. Theatrical entertainments were confined to public holidays.

16Atellan farce was a native Italian type of comedy which used improvisation, obscenity, and parody of tragedy. Autonoe, the mother of Actaeon and sister of Agave and Ino, is a character from tragedy.

17Marcus Fabius Quintilianus (A.D. 40–100), the eminent professor of rhetoric.

18Lentulus is a member of the aristocratic Cornelian family but the child he is presented with is fathered by a murmillo, a type of gladiator.

19Pharos was the island outside Alexandria, here referred to as the city of Lagos after the founder of the Greek dynasty of Egypt. Canopus was a city on the Nile delta which had a reputation for decadence.

242

20A pantomime actor, cf. 7.87n.

21A pretty young man of Sparta, loved by Apollo.

244

22Presumably Eppia's husband, possibly the Veiento of 3.185, 4.113.

23A reference to the emperors, deified after their deaths.

24Messalina.

25The son of Claudius and Messalina.

26Lines 133–5: "Shall I mention love potions and spells and poisons brewed and administered to stepsons? When women are driven by the imperative of sex they do worse things. Their crimes of lust are the least important."

246

27The Caesennii were an important family. One million sesterces would provide the wealth qualification for entry into the Senate.

28Canusium in Apulia was famous for its flocks. Falernian wine was one of the best.

29A street market for the sale of figurines was held during December in the Campus Martius; its canvas booths hid the mural depicting Jason and the Argonauts on Agrippa's Colonnade.

30Queen Berenice was sister of Agrippa II, King of the Jews, and lived with him for periods of her life.

248

31Judaea: a reference to the Jewish sabbath and abstention from pork.

32After the Sabine women had been seized for marriage by Romulus and the Romans, they intervened between their husbands and fathers to prevent war.

33Probably a prostitute.

34Cornelia, mother of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, was the daughter of Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus. During the Second Punic War between Rome and Carthage, her father defeated the Numidian leader Syphax in 203 b.c. and Hannibal at the battle of Zama in 202 b.c.

35Niobe, wife of Amphion, King of Thebes, boasted of her seven sons and seven daughters and thus offended Latona, who sent her two children, Apollo (here called Paeon = Healer) and Diana, to shoot the children. Amphion committed suicide and Niobe was turned into a rock.

36The white sow with her thirty piglets was the omen that the Trojans had reached the site for the foundation of Alba Longa: see 12.70–4n.

250

37A bitter purgative made from the aloe plant.

38Sulmo was a town in Sabine country. Cecrops was the first king of Athens.

39The Latin text has “life and soul” in Greek.

40Evidently actors.

252

41Titles taken by the emperor Trajan in 102 and 97 respectively which appear on his coins.

42Lines 209–11: “Even if she herself is on fire, she enjoys tormenting and fleecing him. So she’s much less use as a wife to any man who wants to be a good and desirable husband.”

254

43A famous Syrian doctor. The mother-in-law’s “illness” is a cover for her daughter’s love affair.

44Aulus Cornelius Celsus, a distinguished rhetorician, or one of the jurists called Publius Iuventius Celsus, either father or son.

45Literally the cloaks worn by athletes after exercise.

46She is training to be a gladiator. The rudis was the wooden sword used in practice.

47At the Floralia, April 28th–May 3rd, women participated in such fights, announced as usual by a fanfare.

256

48A Samnite gladiator had only one leg protected.

49Thracian gladiators wore greaves on both legs.

50Members of eminent Roman families. For Lepidus, see 8.9n. Metellus lost his sight rescuing a statue of Minerva, cf. 3.138–9n. Quintus Fabius Maximus, nicknamed Gurgus (“Maw”), was a great statesman from the third century b.c.

51Evidently a gladiator. The name is a slave name.

258

52Lit. “caterpillar.”

53Quintilian (6.75n.) was a barrister as well as a professor of rhetoric.

54Her “defence” is that it is human to make mistakes, a proverbial line.

55Hannibal reached Rome during 211 b.c., and only heavy rain prevented a battle with the Roman army, camped between the Colline and Esquiline Gates (Liv. 26.10).

56All Greek cities symbolising decadence. A Roman ambassador was insulted by the people of Tarentum at a festival there in 281 b.c.

260

57Wine.

58The temple of Pudicitia in the Forum Boarium.

59Adopting Hendry's emendation of Luna to nullo, this is a pun on the word testis: "with no witness present" and "with no testicle present."

60The Good Goddess (Bona Dea) was a Roman fertility goddess worshipped by women, esp. in a ceremony in December, involving abstention from wine and sex.

61Priapus was a fertility god, depicted with an erect phallus. He was regarded by the Greeks as the son of Dionysus, hence "maenads."

262

62Medullina was a name of the patrician Furii family. Saufeia must also be of high status.

63Priam (the son of Laomedon) and Nestor were the classic examples of old age. Priam's grand patronymic comes from Virg. Aen. 8.158.

64The technical term for putting a male animal to a female animal: Oxford Latin Dictionary 8.

65A reference to the profanation of the mysteries of the Good Goddess in 62 b.c., when Publius Clodius Pulcher infiltrated the ceremony dressed as a female musician. The ceremony that year was held in the house of Julius Caesar, who would later write two speeches criticising his enemy Cato.

264

66Numa, the second king of Rome, was the founder of Roman religion.

67On Clodius, see 6.340–1n.

68 Cinaedus literally denotes "dancer," evidently an effeminate profession.

69The text is obscure and interpretation difficult. I see these as names appropriate to pathics, with the feminine gender of barbata producing a paradox; others have seen metaphorical references to oral sex performed on women and men, perhaps with a line missing between O5 and O6.



70Another controversial passage. The *psilus* is the light-armed gladiator (Greek, “light-armed soldier”), who may also be depilated. The *euhoplus* (a conjecture) would denote an armoured gladiator, with the possible suggestion that he is also sexually vigorous.

71The trainer (*lanista*) stores away the equipment of his troop of gladiators in different places according to status. The text, which is difficult here, seems to rank the professional net fighter (*retiarius*), whose only protection was his trident, net, and shoulder guard, as superior in status to the amateur who wore the tunic.

266

72Fine wines, Alban from Alba Longa, near Rome, and Surrentine from Campania (mod. Sorrento).

73The adulterer is pictured as a pantomime actor playing the part of Thais, the mistress of Alexander the Great, who turns out to be like Triphallus, a name of Priapus, in bed.

268

74For removal of the testicles. Eunuchs were all sterile but they were not necessarily impotent. Moreover, if they could maintain an erection without ejaculation, this could obviously increase the pleasure they could give.

75Heliodorus is a surgeon. The young man he castrates cannot now grow a beard, hence the barber’s loss of income.

76In contrast with the youth castrated in his teens, these boys have had their testes removed before the age of puberty and therefore have only an empty sack and a tiny childlike penis because of the lack of testosterone during puberty.

77Ithyphallic Priapus.

78A long-haired boy favourite named after the god Bacchus. Because he has reached his late teens and is rough with facial and body hair, he will have his hair cut and will perhaps be sold and replaced with a younger boy. The warning is that the well-endowed eunuch will damage him if he has (anal) sex with him. Lines 346–8: “I hear the advice given for ages by you, my old friends: ‘Bolt the door and keep her in.’ But who’s going to chaperone the chaperons themselves? The wife is clever—that’s where she starts.”

270

79I.e. she cannot afford to own these items.

80Line 359: “The limit which it [Poverty] has given and set. Yet what is useful . .  
.”

81The praetors were the magistrates in charge of hiring professional singers for festivals.

82The singer’s name means “Sweet Melody.”

83The Aelii Lamiae and the Appii Claudii were two of Rome’s aristocratic families.

84A famous harpist and singer. The prize he hopes for is the crown of oak leaves at the contests in honour of Capitoline Jupiter.

272

85Part of the ritual at a sacrifice.

86From so much standing as he reads the entrails.

87Comets were bad omens, indicating changes of power.

88Actually a mountain in Armenia; Juvenal, like Lucan 3.245 and Silius Italicus 13.765, regards it as a river.

274

89Evidently a practice favoured by some athletic types.

90Wine.

91Probably a fable.

92Dido, queen of Carthage. Virgil describes her tragic death in Aeneid 4.

93Publius Vergilius Maro, i.e. Virgil.

276

94It was thought that making a din could drive away the demons who caused eclipses of the moon. Line 444: “Philosophers say there’s a limit even to good things.”

95The first century schoolteacher Quintus Remmius Palaemon wrote a famous grammar book.

96All marks of being a man: the tunica was male clothing, the god Silvanus was worshipped by men, and the admittance fee to the baths was just a quadrans for men.

278

97The perfumed face-pack is named after Nero's wife Poppaea.

98A mythical people who lived "beyond the North Wind." The story of the she-asses is told of Poppaea at Plin. N.H. 11.238.

99Perfumes.

100Or perhaps "her secretary."

101A Liburnian slave is a litter-bearer.

280

102Her account book is in a format where the roll runs from top to bottom instead of the normal side-to-side.

103The tyrants of Sicily, Phalaris of Agrigentum and Dionysius I of Syracuse, were bywords for cruelty.

104The temple of Isis was a notorious spot for assignations.

105A classic name for a lady's hairdressing slave, from the Greek for dropping hair oil.

106Wife of Hector, said to have been very tall.

282

107Closely associated in cult: on Bellona, see 4.123–4n., and on Cybele and her eunuch priests, the Galli, see 2.111n.

108The Campus Martius, which belonged to the Tarquin kings until the overthrow of Tarquin the Proud in 510 b.c.

109Io was turned into a white heifer and chased by Juno. She visited Egypt and became associated or confused with the goddess Isis. Meroë is further south, a kingdom on the Upper Nile. Isis' temple in the Campus Martius was next to the polling booths (saepta) which are here called the "sheepfold."

284

110Anubis, the dog-headed god and guardian of Isis. Here a priest dressed as Anubis mocks the people for their lamentation over the “death” of Osiris, the consort of Isis.

111Probably the sacred asp. Snakes were associated with Isis.

112Evidently a fortune-teller. The reference to the tree is problematical: see Courtney’s note. A word denoting “temple” would make better sense.

113Astrologers, highly influential.

286

114The oracle of Jupiter Ammon in North Africa.

115The great oracles such as Delphi had fallen into neglect by this time.

116Line 561: “and the left hand, if he has languished far away in a military prison.”

117State criminals were banished to small islands such as Seriphus in the Cyclades.

118Wife of the fifth king of Rome, Tarquinius Priscus, and an expert in divination.

119Carried by women for the scent they produced.

120The astrologer consulted by the emperor Tiberius.

288

121An Egyptian astrologer of the second century b.c.

122The two ends of the racetrack in the Circus Maximus, a haunt of fortune-tellers.

123Evidently part of the magic.

124The priest does this as a form of public purification, cordoning off the place. Cf. Persius 2.27n.

125Features of the Circus Maximus.

290

126Children abandoned at birth were adopted by families desperate for children, including elite families, such as the Aemilii Scauri, who provided priests such as pontifices and Salii.

127The emperor Caligula was driven mad by his wife Caesonia with an aphrodisiac she had made from hippomanes, the membrane on a newborn foal's head.

292

128The mushroom with which Agrippina is said to have poisoned Claudius. The phrase "go down to heaven" may allude to Seneca's satire on Claudius' apotheosis in the *Apocolocyntosis*.

129Not legal, but Juvenal implies that it would be condoned.

130**Martial** mentions a poisoner called Pontia, 4.43 and 6.75.

294

131Medea, princess of Colchis, killed her brother and cut his body into pieces to slow down her father while she was eloping with Jason; she later killed the two children she had with Jason after he deserted her. Procne killed her son and served up his body to her husband Tereus as revenge for his raping her sister Philomela.

132Alcestis volunteered to die on behalf of her husband Admetus, king of Thessaly.

133Belus was the father of Danaus, father of the fifty Danaids who, with one exception, killed their husbands on their wedding night.

134Eriphyle accepted a bribe to persuade her husband Amphiaraus to participate in the attack of the "Seven Against Thebes" even though it would be fatal to him.

135Clytemnestra, the adulterous wife of Agamemnon, king of Mycenae, who killed her husband on his return from Troy.

136Agamemnon.

137Mithridates VI, king of Pontus, defeated by Pompey after three Roman campaigns against him. His long life was said to be due to his self-immunisation against poison.